

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Attached is a Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets including a change to Fig. 24.

These Replacement Drawing Sheets, which include all of Figs. 1-24 in this application, replace the previously-filed drawing sheets. In these Replacement Drawing Sheets, Fig. 24 has been amended to include the legend "PRIOR ART" in response to the objection to the drawings in the Office Action.

REMARKS**Summary of the Office Action**

The drawings stand objected to because Figure 24 should allegedly be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art--.

Claims 1 and 6 stand objected to because of informalities.

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over what the Office Action refers to as “the Applicant’s Prior Art Figure 24 (APAF)” in view of Kobayashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,001,863) (hereinafter “Kobayashi”).

Claims 4-6, while objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicant has amended claims 4-6 to rewrite each of these claims as independent claims in accordance with the Examiner’s indication of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and the dependency of claim 2 has been amended to be dependent on newly-amended claim 4. Newly-added dependent claims 7-10 have also been added to mirror features originally described in dependent claims 2-3. The features of original claims 1 (original claim 1’s features are now described in claims 4, 5 and 6), 5 and 6 have also been amended to improve the form of the claims. Accordingly, claims 1-6 remain pending for consideration.

Objection to the Drawings

The drawings stand objected to because Figure 24 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art--. In the Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets filed concurrently herewith, Applicant has amended the drawings by labeling Fig. 24 as "Prior Art." Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Objection to Claims 1 and 6

Claims 1 and 6 stand objected to because of allegedly informalities. Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. However, the features of original claim 1 have been added to newly-amended independent claims 4, 5 and 6. Applicant has implemented the Examiner's helpful suggestions at page 2 of the Office Action to the features of claims 1 and 6. A similar amendment as that implemented to claim 6 has also been made to claim 5 to improve the form of claim 5 even though claim 5 was not objected to by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to claims 1 and 6 be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over what the Office Action refers to as "APAF" in view of Kobayashi. The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 4-6, while objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicant has amended claims 4-6 to rewrite each of these claims as independent claims in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. Accordingly, newly-amended independent

claims 4, 5 and 6 are now in prima-facie condition for allowance in light of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. Withdrawal of the objections to claims 4-6 is thus respectfully requested.

As a result, Applicants respectfully assert that the rejections of claim 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn because independent claim 1 has thus been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Furthermore, dependent claim 2 has been amended so that dependent claims 2 and 3 now depend from newly-amended independent claim 4. Applicants respectfully assert that dependent claims 2-3, as well as newly-added dependent claims 7-8 and 9-10, are allowable at least because of their dependence from independent claim 4, 5 or 6 as amended, and the reasons set forth above.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request reconsideration and timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

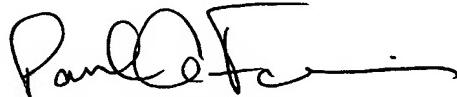
EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including

any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573.

This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: December 13, 2007

By:

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